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EMERGING PATTERN OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION : A CASE STUDY

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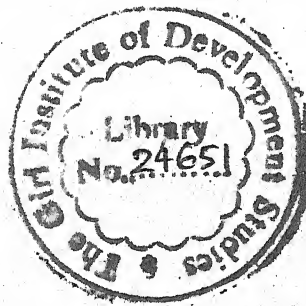
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EMERGING PATTERN OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION : A CASE STUDY*

G.S. Mehta

INTRODUCTION

The current concern with social and economic conditions reflects a growing emphasis on the aspects of population distribution between rural and urban areas in developing countries. These concerns are well recognised and are associated with the levels of disparities existing in the standard of living and quality of life and also increasing trend of rural-urban migration. Among the different forms of migration rural to urban migration is considered to be more significant than the rest from the socio-economic point of view. The increasing trend of migration from rural to urban settlements has been significantly contributing to the population explosion and unprecedented changes in the size structure of metropolitan cities, though the contribution of rural migrants constitutes only 39 per cent in the urban population.

The rural-urban migration on account of its being the index of the growing industrialisation of the economy, urban industrial development offers a positive inducement to the rural people to move to the industries in urban areas for

*The paper is an outcome of the study 'Socio-Economic Aspects of Migration in Kanpur City' carried out by the author at the Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow. The paper was presented in the National Symposium on Impact of Urbanisation and Industrialisation on Rural Society, held at Maharaja Surajmal Institute, New Delhi during December 19-21, 1990.

improvement of their economic status. Moreover, the increasing trend of migration which is empirically evident between rural-urban areas has been caused by existing differentials in the availability situation of incomes and the differences in the levels of various amenities of life. Lower levels of earnings and socio-economic facilities of life available in agriculture based economy of rural areas push the labourforce in search of higher levels of incomes and amenities of life in the modern industrial based economy in urban areas. Todaro's migration assumptions are also that migration is based largely on rational economic calculations by the potential migrants. It also postulates that migration decision making is in response to rural-urban differences in expected rather than actual earnings. Accordingly several of the migration models developed during recent past also focus on the differences in the opportunities of different kinds, mainly employment, income and social infrastructural facilities, between rural-urban areas are the important factors associated with increasing trend of migration from rural to urban areas particularly into larger metropolitan cities.

Moreover, in India, the concentration of rural migrants in urban settlements is considered to be more than one-half of the native population. Non-availability of employment opportunities and low level of incomes are indicated to be the most important factors related inversely with the increasing propensity of migration. Other kinds of migration relates to education, social, cultural and political which tend to effect

smaller size of population belonging to the economically well off section of the society, have only marginal share to the total volume of migration. However, during recent past the proportion of people migrating due to family movement has been found to be increasing considerably while those migrating for finding employment has reduced substantially.

Most migration studies have focussed on out migration of people from rural areas to urban settlements which has been primarily associated with economic motivation. This economic problem has arisen basically due to constantly increasing village population leading to increased pressure of population on land and hence causing problems of sub-division and fragmentation of land holdings, making them uneconomic, and secondly set back to rural handicrafts, artisan activities and other household industries/enterprises caused by industrial revolution. The net effect of it is the creation of the situation of unemployment, indebtedness and poverty which compel the rural poors to the cities in search of livelihood.

However, the empirical studies carried out during recent past and the migration literatures are concerned reveal that though, the rural-urban migration stream has been the most important component for supplying the different skilled and unskilled kind of manpower requirement into industrial environment in urban settlements, even today the proportion of migrants arriving from rural areas to major metropolitan cities is much larger than those arriving from remaining streams, but the rate of rural-urban migration, particularly, in well known

has narrowed down substantially, industrial cities/ The recent changes in the magnitude of migration motivation and decreasing trend of migration have been the result of the initiation of rural development programme particularly those linked with the creation of employment opportunities and the urbanisation policy of Government which relates to the development of small towns/cities through initiating several developmental measures in these towns.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study based on the primary data collected from the sample of 1000 migrant households in Kanpur metropolitan city attempts to examine the changes perceived firstly, in the trends of migration from different streams, secondly, causes and motivations of migration, and thirdly, some socio-economic characteristics of the migrants' at initiating migration, which could provide the relevant idea regarding the changes incurred in the behaviour of migration and who are migrating, besides the changes in the magnitude of migration characteristics over the years.

TRENDS OF MIGRATION

Concerning with the increasing trend of migration between different streams the public debates usually focus on rural-urban component of migration as the dominant stream. However, it has universally been believed that rural-urban migration makes a relatively smaller contribution than the increase of natural population to urban growth. No doubt in the stock of migrants in urban areas the contribution of migrants arrived

from rural areas is comparatively much larger than the remaining stream of migration. Keeping into consideration our analysis we find that over three-fourths of migrants in the sample city have reported arrived from rural areas alone. However, the trend of migration is indicated to be declining consistently over the years, but a higher rate from rural as compared to urban migrants, even between 1976-81 periods, the rate of migration from urban stream have remained almost stagnant while it has gone down from 7.27 per cent to 2.91 per cent for those arrived from rural areas. In the stock of migrants in the city, the proportion of them who arrived from within state is estimated comparatively much larger (78%) than the outside state. And over 65 per cent of the migrants reported to have arrived from rural areas of neighbouring districts of the state as against of only 10 per cent from rural areas of other states. This indicates that the faster rate of urbanisation which has taken place as a result of faster industrial development in Kanpur has been significantly beneficial to the surrounding rural people in finding opportunities of different kinds particularly employment and in shifting from their low paid agriculture based jobs to high paid industrial jobs.

The proposition related to the trend of migration into sample city reveals that the flows of migration from different streams are consistently narrowing down, excepting the flow from rural areas of outside state has gone up two-folds between 1976 to 1981 and post 1981 periods. It is also indicated that

Table 1 : Trend of Migration by Its Origin

Origin of Migration	Period of Migration						
	Before 1960	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80 onwards	1981 & All	
Within State	404 (51.79)	116 (14.87)	104 (13.33)	72 (9.23)	59 (7.56)	25 (3.21)	780 (100.00)
Rural	334 (51.07)	97 (14.83)	90 (13.76)	62 (9.48)	53 (8.10)	18 (2.75)	654 (100.00)
Urban	70 (55.56)	19 (15.08)	14 (11.11)	10 (7.94)	6 (4.76)	7 (5.56)	126 (100.00)
Outside State	151 (68.64)	27 (12.27)	19 (8.64)	10 (4.55)	6 (2.73)	7 (3.18)	220 (100.00)
Rural	73 (70.87)	12 (11.65)	9 (8.74)	3 (2.91)	2 (1.94)	4 (3.88)	103 (100.00)
Urban	78 (66.67)	15 (12.82)	10 (8.55)	7 (5.98)	4 (3.42)	3 (2.56)	117 (100.00)
All Origins	555 (55.50)	143 (14.30)	123 (12.30)	82 (8.20)	65 (6.50)	32 (3.20)	1000 (100.00)
Rural	407 (53.76)	109 (14.40)	99 (13.08)	65 (8.59)	55 (7.27)	22 (2.91)	757 (100.00)
Urban	148 (60.91)	34 (13.99)	24 (9.88)	17 (7.00)	10 (7.00)	10 (4.12)	243 (100.00)

the contribution of migration in the growth of city has been largely effected due to higher rate of migration from rural areas before 1960. And the larger volume of migrants are noticed from surrounding areas as compared to outside the state. We also found that considerable changes has occurred in the migration trends of population from different streams over the period of time. The decreasing trend of migration is noticed more sharper from outside state as compared to within states, in case of both rural and urban components. In all, in absolute

terms, the migration into sample city from the nearby rural areas is indicated to be consistently at larger volume as compared to outside state in all years.

MOTIVE OF MIGRATION

In the foregoing analysis the study relates only to the sample of migrants who migrated in city from rural areas.

Incorporating various motives/purposes of migration the analysis reveals that a majority of the rural people have migrated in the city for seeking employment opportunities (30%) and equal proportion to accompanied their parents while a lowest proportion of them have arrived for other purposes like political, personal and due to natural calamities. It is further pointed out that the proportion of migrants those are migrating for seeking employment and the availment of educational facilities in the urban areas has been significantly declining while those migrating due to transfer of job from another areas to the city and migration of their family members has been increasing over the years. A decrease in the proportions of migrants arriving in Kanpur industrial city for seeking employment opportunities may be either due to decline in potentials of employment opportunities or due to shift in the industrial development from city to its peripheries or there has been significant level of progress in the development and employment opportunities within the rural areas. Similarly, the expansion of educational facilities has also been quite significant in rural areas which has reflected the decreasing trend of migration motivation for availing education in the city.

Table 2 : Purpose of Migration

Cause of Migration	Period of Migration						Total
	Before 1960	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1980 & onwards	
Accompanied Parents	121 (29.73)	30 (27.52)	25 (25.25)	24 (36.92)	17 (30.91)	7 (31.82)	224 (29.59)
Education	108 (26.54)	18 (16.51)	23 (23.23)	7 (10.77)	9 (16.36)	2 (9.09)	167 (22.06)
Employment	135 (33.17)	39 (35.78)	26 (26.26)	12 (18.46)	10 (18.18)	3 (13.64)	225 (29.72)
Transfer of Job	25 (6.14)	16 (14.68)	21 (21.21)	20 (30.77)	16 (29.09)	8 (36.36)	106 (14.00)
Others	18 (4.42)	6 (5.50)	4 (4.04)	2 (3.08)	3 (5.45)	2 (9.09)	35 (4.62)
All	407 (100.0)	109 (100.0)	99 (100.0)	65 (100.0)	55 (100.0)	22 (100.0)	757 (100.0)

CAUSES OF MIGRATION

Most of the migration studies which were undertaken during recent past have emphasized the role of economic factor and lesser employment opportunities available in rural areas as an important cause of migration. However, a smaller size of persons initiate the decision of migration due to lack of amenities of life, social discrimination and the incidence of natural calamities and so on. But the opinion of the scholars is that most of the migration from rural to urban areas is by and large related to economically motivated reasons. In uneven distribution of economic activities, the level among regions and regional reproductive differences of population tend to

Table 3 : Causes of Migration

Causes of Migration	Period of Migration						Total
	Before 1960	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981 & onwards	
Poverty	91 (59.48)	22 (48.89)	14 (46.67)	6 (42.86)	4 (30.77)	1 (20.00)	138 (53.08)
Better Employment	47 (30.72)	16 (35.56)	11 (36.67)	7 (50.00)	6 (46.15)	3 (60.00)	90 (34.62)
Amenities of Life	2 (1.31)	3 (6.67)	3 (10.00)	1 (7.14)	2 (15.38)	1 (20.00)	12 (4.62)
Social Discrimination	6 (3.92)	2 (4.44)	-	-	-	-	8 (3.08)
Natural Calamities	4 (2.61)	1 (2.22)	1 (3.33)	-	1 (7.69)	-	7 (2.69)
Others	3 (1.96)	1 (2.22)	1 (3.33)	-	-	-	5 (1.92)
Total	153 (100.0)	45 (100.0)	30 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	13 (100.0)	5 (100.0)	260* (100.0)

* Total includes only those migrants who reported causes of migration.

reinforce each other to accelerate migratory movements. In fact, expectations are that the significant changes might have taken place in the reported causes of migration during recent past as a result of improvements in the distribution of employment and income opportunities in rural areas of the country. Considering our sample data we find that the migration of around 89 per cent migrants was related to economic factors, though over one-third of rural people were already employed and migrated to the city for seeking better earning opportunities, but over one-half of them initiated migration decision due to poverty reason. Remaining 12 per cent have arrived in the city

due to lesser opportunities of amenities of life, social discrimination by their society/community and the incidence of natural calamities existed at the native place. Further, considering into account the changes in the causes of migration of people which have migrated during different periods of time, it is indicated that the proportions of rural people migrating outside from native place in search of better remunerative employment opportunities and due to lack of amenities of life have been increasing while those who have indicated to have migrated due to poverty has been decreasing consistently over the years. The proportion of migrants to have migrated for better employment and availing amenities of life in the city has gone up from 31 per cent to 60 per cent and 1 per cent to 20 per cent respectively while those migrated due to poverty the figures has gone down from 60 per cent to 20 per cent among those migrated before 1960 and post 1981 periods. This indicates that in the rural areas, the employment opportunities has been increased substantially, though low paid employment as compared to urban modern economy and also the poverty has been alleviated at significant levels while the basic amenities of life are still lacking.

ACTIVITY STATUS AT NATIVE PLACE

Analysis pertaining to the activity status of migrants at the place of origin before initiating migration decision depicts that over one-half of them were either children or students followed by 27 per cent and 21 per cent employed and unemployed respectively. However, the proportion of migrants

Table 4 : Activity Status at Native Place

Period of Migration	Activity Status				
	Child	Students	Working	Unemployed	Total
Before 1960	108 (26.54)	123 (30.22)	96 (23.59)	80 (19.66)	407 (100.0)
1961 - 65	21 (19.27)	27 (24.77)	30 (27.52)	31 (28.44)	109 (100.0)
1966 - 70	20 (20.20)	26 (26.26)	33 (33.33)	20 (20.20)	99 (100.0)
1971 - 75	8 (12.31)	22 (33.85)	19 (29.23)	16 (24.62)	65 (100.0)
1976 - 80	12 (18.46)	19 (29.23)	17 (26.15)	7 (10.77)	55 (100.0)
1981 & onwards	4 (18.18)	6 (27.27)	9 (40.91)	3 (13.64)	22 (100.0)
Total	173 (22.85)	223 (29.46)	204 (26.95)	157 (20.74)	757 (100.0)

arriving from rural areas as child (to join their family members), after completion of study and those were facing the conditions of unemployment has significantly narrowed down while those reported employed in some economic activities the proportion has gone up from around 24 per cent to 41 per cent for migrants arrived in the city before 1960 and post/ 1981 periods respectively. Thus it appears that there has been significant levels of changes in the magnitude of rural-urban migration, particularly since the last decade. Since the migration of the majority of rural people has taken place for better paid employment opportunities rather than in search of any kind and status of employment.

AGE AT MIGRATION

Dealing with the age characteristics of migrants at the time of leaving the native place we find that ^a highest proportion of them migrated at young age 15 to 35 years (55%) followed by below 15 years (30%) and above 30 years (16%) age. However, the proportions of migrants leaving the rural areas at relatively lower age groups (below 15 and 25 years) are consistently decreasing but those are migrating at above 35 years age are consequently increasing over the years. This could be basically a result of the fact that among the recent migrants a majority of them were employed at their native place.

Table 5 : Age at Migration

Period of Migration	Age Groups (Years)				All Groups
	Below 15	15 - 25	25 - 35	35 +	
Before 1960	142(34.89)	132(32.43)	80(19.66)	53(13.02)	407(100.0)
1961 - 65	24(22.02)	42(38.53)	27(24.77)	16(14.68)	109(100.0)
1966 - 70	27(27.27)	32(32.32)	23(23.23)	17(17.17)	99(100.0)
1971 - 75	15(23.08)	18(27.69)	21(32.31)	11(16.92)	65(100.0)
1976 - 80	14(25.45)	15(27.27)	15(27.27)	11(20.20)	55(100.0)
1981 & onwards	4(18.18)	2(9.09)	8(36.36)	8(36.36)	22(100.0)
Total	226(29.85)	241(31.84)	174(22.99)	116(15.32)	757(100.0)

LEVEL OF EDUCATION

The educational characteristics of migrants show that over 64 per cent of them had atleast some level of education while out migrating from rural areas. Of these around one-third had

Table 6 : Distribution of Migrants by Level of Education

Level of Education	Before 1960	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1980 & All onwards	All Groups
Illiterate	193 (47.42)	34 (31.19)	18 (18.18)	10 (15.38)	10 (18.18)	4 (18.18)	269 (35.54)
Below Primary	80 (19.66)	10 (9.17)	8 (8.08)	5 (7.69)	1 (1.82)	-	104 (13.74)
Primary	61 (14.99)	19 (17.43)	17 (17.17)	17 (26.15)	9 (16.36)	2 (9.09)	125 (16.51)
Middle	45 (11.06)	18 (16.51)	14 (14.14)	8 (12.31)	6 (10.91)	5 (22.73)	96 (12.68)
Secondary	22 (5.41)	23 (21.10)	32 (32.32)	18 (27.69)	12 (21.82)	3 (13.64)	110 (14.53)
Graduation	6 (1.47)	4 (3.67)	6 (6.06)	4 (6.15)	7 (12.73)	6 (27.27)	33 (4.36)
Post-Graduation	-	1 (0.92)	3 (3.03)	2 (3.08)	7 (12.73)	-	13 (1.72)
Professional/Technical	-	-	1 (1.01)	1 (1.54)	3 (5.45)	2 (9.09)	7 (0.92)
All Levels	407 (100.0)	109 (100.0)	99 (100.0)	65 (100.0)	55 (100.0)	22 (100.0)	757 (100.0)

elementary level of education. However, over 36 per cent were illiterate. Further, we found that there has been considerable improvements in the proportions of well educated persons which arrived in the city during recent past. Consequently the proportion of illiterate migrants has gone down from 47 per cent to 18 per cent while those had above graduation level of education the proportion has gone up from 1.47 per cent to 36.36 per cent of those arrived from rural areas to the city before 1960 and post

1981 periods respectively. This suggests that there might have been considerable progress in providing educational facilities of different levels in the rural areas. It has, further to be added that the continuation and increasing trend of well educated individuals in this manner could be beneficial from the view point of economic development of urban areas as a consequences the personal income levels will also increase substantially.

CONCLUSION

The overall analysis, thus, depicted that considerable changes have occurred in the trend of migration from different streams. The traditional phenomenon of increasing trend of migration from rural areas to urban settlements has been seen completely unrealistic as the migration from rural areas has been narrowing down significantly over the years, though in the stock of migrants in the city the proportion of migrants arrived from rural areas continues to be much larger, because a larger volume of rural migrants than the migrants of other streams had initially arrived in the city before 1965. Similarly the proportion of migrants who arrived in the city from surrounding rural areas is much higher than those arrived from outside state. One implication of this changing trend of rural-urban migration is that the general development and improvements in socio-economic conditions in rural areas, the rural-urban migration would be more of a qualitative than the quantitative character. To some extent the distribution of employment opportunities available between rural-urban areas would have been more equitable which have changed the pattern of motivation

for migrants and the characteristics of migrants during recent past. Since the proportion of migrants reported employed and contributing some amount of income to their households at the native place has been consistently increasing over the years. Also the average age at migration is significantly increasing as a result of their being employed. Finally, it is observed that the proportions of persons migrating for seeking employment and those who were employed at the native place has been narrowing down but those migrating for availment of basic amenities of life are consequently increasing over the years, though lower status and category of employment available in rural areas is found to be the major cause of increasing rate of migration but the migration carried out due to poverty and non-availability of educational facilities has been narrowing down at substantial level.

To sum up, the trend and magnitude of migration has changed its shape during recent past due to change in the dilemma of national urbanisation policy and the diversification and establishment of larger industries in the small towns and peripheries of large town besides, the increased opportunities of employment and social infrastructural facilities in the rural areas with the initiation of rural development programmes. With the development of small towns and peripheries the flow of migration has been significantly diverted towards these cities. In fact, the growth of large size groups of towns having population more than 25 lakhs have slowed down

or become almost stagnant while the population in towns with below 50 thousands has been increasing at faster rate.

By way of policy recommendation it is, therefore, suggested that in order to check migration basic facilities such as education, health and employment should be provided in rural areas. For this there is need for a better implementation of the rural development programmes. Greater stress on development of those rural and cottage industries be given which are viable and can provide employment and income on a sustained basis. The policy of the Government to promote the development of small and medium towns through provision of various infrastructural facilities, decentralisation and diversification of economic activities should be stepped up. This will not only check out-migration but will also prove beneficial in the development of those rural areas which are in the proximity of these towns.

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